

# Middle School Endorsements

Ensuring that an appropriately prepared and endorsed teacher is assigned to teach in Michigan's classrooms is critical to student achievement. The State Board of Education (SBE) has [approved standards](#) for preparing teachers in each endorsement area.

Included in these preparation programs, Michigan has historically offered two different middle school or middle level endorsement programs. The Middle Level Specialization (ZL) endorsement and the Middle School (ZD) endorsement.

## **Middle School 5-9 (ZD) Endorsement**

This endorsement was available for teachers with endorsements in the secondary grade ranges until approximately 1989. It specifically expanded the "7-8 all Subjects" endorsement to include 5-9 all subjects. It is rare but does exist for a small cadre of Michigan teachers. This endorsement has long been discontinued and no new endorsements of this type can be added to a Michigan certificate. More information on the "all subjects" endorsements can be found in the [Self-Contained Classroom Guide](#).

## **Middle Level Specialization (ZL) Endorsement**

The endorsement is currently available to Michigan teachers who complete a preparation program focused on the specific needs of adolescence. It expands a teacher's endorsements to either grades 5-12, K-9 or 5-9.

## **Grade Bands**

In February 2016, some elementary endorsements were expanded to provide clarity to administrators placing teachers in elementary assignments. Many 6-8 endorsements now read K-8. The decision to make this change was meant to provide a clearer description of the preparation program a teacher completed.

In August 2006, law passed to expand all 7-12 endorsements to include 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Certificates printed or viewed on the public view of the [Michigan Online Educator Certification System](#) (MOECS) will appear with 6-12 endorsements where appropriate. All endorsements previously listed as 7-12 are now considered 6-12. *This law did not change the ZD and ZL endorsements described above.*

## **Additional Information**

Ensuring that an appropriately prepared and endorsed educator is assigned to teach in Michigan's schools is critical to student achievement. MDE recommends local districts consider pedagogical practices, content knowledge, and professional behaviors when placing staff to best serve the needs of all students in their districts.

Additional information and clarity on best practices for teacher assignment can be found in the [Appropriate Placement of Educators Guidance](#) document.